

Wm. Williams

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED

IN THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHBOROUGH,

ON THE OCCASION OF

OPENING THE FAY LIBRARY.

FEBRUARY 12TH, 1852.

BY A. L. HOBART, A. M., M. D.

BOSTON:

BAZIN AND CHANDLER, PRINTERS, 37 CORNHILL,
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A D D R E S S .

WE meet this evening, fellow-citizens, on no common occasion. We come together to contemplate a thing of no ordinary interest, a thing beautiful, and harmonious, and useful, — a theme admitting of no sectional or sectarian interest. Every jarring thought, and discordant feeling, may well be left at home ; for the subject before us challenges the approval of all enlightened and liberal minds, — forces them to see eye to eye, and coalesce, as kindred drops are mingled into one. The theme of rejoicing is, that there is a new avenue opened, — a new facility granted, for enlightening and elevating the minds of our citizens ; and that all may fully understand, it is on this wise, viz. :

Col. FRANCIS FAY, in the fulness of his soul, and the liberality of his spirit, conceived in his heart to do a good thing unto the inhabitants of the good old town of South-boro', which gave him birth, and so, unsolicited, and of his own good will and pleasure, he thrust his hand deep into his pocket, and drawing forth five hundred pieces of silver, held them up before the eyes of the inhabitants of this town, while he thus spake :

Fellow-citizens ! Fellow-townsmen ! I was born, and nurtured, and rocked, and reared in your midst. I am

one of you, and you are dear unto me. And the old cradle in which I was rocked is still among you ; and I was pleased when I heard a sweet poetic voice from your midst, say of it :

“ Oh take it not away,
It is to memory dear ;
It was my infant's cradle bed,
And it hath been their bier !
Though it is old and worn,
Still let it here remain ;—
A mother with fond care hath watched
O'er forms within it lain.
'Tis treasured in my mind,
With many precious things ; —
In the lone hours of solitude,
Sweet are the joys it brings.
Call it not worthless trash,
For many a heart it cheers ;
From many an eye it drives afar
Griefs, ever bitter tears.”

W And now, as you are dear unto me, and as my heart and my hand are drawn towards you in affection, and as the enlightenment and elevation of your minds are things near my heart, therefore, if all together, or any of you, will give a like sum, I will give these five hundred pieces of silver, to form the nucleus of a Town Library, which shall be free for all the inhabitants of the town, to use for their improvement, and for their children's children forever.

And he sat down, as the murmur of approbation ran through the assembled multitude.

Then the Elders of the people arose, and said, “ It is a good thing that which our brother hath spoken.” Now, let us accept the five hundred pieces of silver, and put five hundred more with them, and establish a Library,

which shall be a fountain of wisdom for our people forever. And all the people said, Amen. And the assembly of the people set apart, and ordained twelve Elders, and laid upon their shoulders the burden of these things ; and behold their priesthood is perpetual. And these are the names of them : Francis, and Fitch, and Charles, and Sullivan, and Dexter, and Jonas, and David, and Solomon, and James, and Peter, and Isaac. And they chose unto themselves a Scribe ; and behold his name is Josiah. And behold, it came to pass, that the twelve Elders chose wise men of their own number, who journeyed Eastward to the great city, Shawmut, threw down their five hundred pieces of silver, and lading their asses with so many books, that it would seem the world could not contain so many more, journeyed homeward to this good land of Goshen, and laid them aside in convenient places, prepared by workers in wood and cunning artificers in the nether part of this temple. And, behold now, I am commanded by the twelve Elders to proclaim unto all the people, that the fountain of knowledge is open, and to invite all that are athirst to come and drink without money, and without price. And Josiah, the Scribe, will fill the goblets for you, and record your names in the books that are open. And behold, the seventh day of the week shall be held in perpetual remembrance as the day of the feast.

This, fellow-citizens, is a brief and quaint history of the events which have followed each other, step by step, from the conception of the original idea in the heart of benevolence, down to the establishment of one of the finest Libraries ever sent from heaven to bless the inhabitants of any town.

Dark, and sear, and dismal indeed, would be the face of the world, were it not for those natural fountains which spring up everywhere from her bosom, and gathering their thousands of tributary rills, roll on, to enliven, beautify, irrigate, enrich, and fertilize her surface, even till they reach the distant ocean, and bear the commerce of the world upon their bosom.

And so it is in the moral and intellectual world. Dark, and sear, and dismal indeed, would be her aspect, were it not for the breaking up of those fountains of benevolence, which give vitality, and nutriment, and symmetry, and vigor, and abundance to intellectual and moral vegetation.

What would Egypt, with her abundance, and her teeming millions, soon become without the Nile? Physically, a dark and dismal waste, — a shapeless heap of ruins! — just what America would soon become, in her moral aspect, were her fountains of benevolence dried up, her libraries destroyed, her places of instruction demolished, her means of intellectual, moral, and religious culture, abolished!

But here language fails me. The English tongue has no terms adequate to describe the fathomless misery, and none but a demon can conceive the damning woe of a scene like this! These considerations should make us love our country, our birthright, our town, and our benefactors more. They should lead us to high resolves, and ceaseless efforts to improve ourselves, while brighter scenes and more cheering prospects are before us.

The most acceptable gratitude we can show for our privileges, and our gratuities, is, to make the wisest and most diligent improvement of them, — to strive for the highest mental illumination, as the greatest earthly good.

But what are the particular reasons, which have called us together in festivity, to rejoice, and hold a town's grand jubilee to-night?

It is because there has been a mighty resurrection from the dead, — a resurrection of prophets and priests, of philosophers and sages, of historians and orators, and an unnumbered host of the wise and good, for centuries dead, touched by our benefactor's magic wand, have burst the fetters of the tomb, left their grave-clothes behind, and, joined by a multitude of modern sages, both among the living and the dead, from both Continents and Islands of the sea, like the star of Empire, have westward bent their way, and made a grand arrival here :

“ Patriots are here, in freedom's battle slain,
 Priests, whose long lives were closed without a stain ;
 Bards, worthy him who breathed the poet's mind,
 Founders of arts, that dignify mankind,
 And lovers of our race, whose labors gave
 Their names a memory that defies the grave.”

But fear not. They come with no hostile purpose. The lion now lies down with the lamb, and a little child may lead them. They come but to tell of wonders that have been, and make us wiser, better men. Our own country, too, is well represented here. Our own Washington, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen, with armor all untarnished, stands amid the throng, and seems to be their moving spirit. His is among the names, the immortal names, that were not born to die.

He bids an affectionate and final adieu to his compatriots in arms, and discourses to the world's august assemblage, on the mechanism of government, and the genius of liberty, the dangers of intervention to promote

non-intervention, in language little short of divine inspiration.

King David, too, is here, holding fast his sling. His foot is on the neck of old Goliath, yielding up the Ghost. But what is this that meets the eye? These are sure dissolving views! I see him now with hoary locks; I see the wrinkles on his brow, the furrows in his cheek; I see the sceptre and the crown! I hear him say, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod, and thy staff, they comfort me." I see the Witch of Endor, and old Samuel's peering head. And through their magic glass annihilating time and space, I see far distant things. I see the world in one dark chaos; and now I see God's fingers lighting up the sun, and moon, and stars; and I hear their first song, as the morning stars together sing, with such a voice, and in such harmony, as fill all worlds with melody.

And now I see, as by enchantment, dry land emerging from the deep; I see dry clods shoot upward into trees, and some go forth, the cattle on a thousand hills,—some penetrate the sea, and swim as whales, and swarm as smaller fish throughout the waste of waters; while some a prouder action take, and fly as fowls, through heaven's wide space! And now I see a verdant garden fenced around, amid the enchanting groves where celestial songsters pour their richest melodies,—the tree of life, with its abundant, varied, spicy fruits,—a river, clear and deep, rolls beneath the branches, with luxuriant vegetation on its shores. And now I hear from heaven a voice, "Let us make man in our own image;" and he walks erect through fragrant groves, along the cooling streams, divinely fair!—the noblest work of God! and

yet again that voice I hear, "It is not good for man to be alone;" and from his side forth springs a virgin, fairer, lovelier, sweeter still; and now I turn away, lest Satan come, and bring a withering curse. I see Abel weltering in his gore, — Cain deep-dyed with everlasting shame.

Old Sampson, walking with a weaver's beam inwoven in his hair, — I see him eyeless and almost hairless, bending beneath the pillars of Philistine's temple; and now I hear a crash, — a deafening shriek, — a deadly groan, and all is hush. He's buried deep, a mangled corpse, 'neath heathen ruins, mid hosts of heathen carcasses.

I see a flood of waters deep engulph the world! and drown of man, and beast, and bird, all save those that floated in the lonely ark! I see the mighty waves dash o'er the embattled hosts of heathendom, and overwhelm them in the relentless deep; and now upon the water's brink, I hear God's chosen ones sing loud hallelujahs for their great deliverance. I see King Solomon, pressing still his golden throne; Absalom, swinging from the oaken branches by his matted hair: old savage Esau, huge and hairy as a grizzly bear; Satan, struck from heaven's high arch, in the infernal pit engulfed. I see Gabriel stand, one foot on sea, and one on solid land. Through the mists of time's long vista, I see the world convulsed.

The bright sun is extinguished, and the stars do wander, darkling in the eternal space, rayless and pathless. The sable sky, the shivering earth, the rending rocks, the temple's veil all rent in twain, disclose an awful scene! Hear that plaintive, yet majestic voice, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!"

Who is that, that grasping firm the iron trumpet of his mother tongue, is shaking every throne in Europe? Who but Martin Luther? Who but he dare throw his inkstand at the devil? Who but Chalmers cries, "Salvation! O salvation's joyful sound!"

But who's that weeping in our midst? Just hark, and hear him sob! 'Tis Alexander sheds his tears for other worlds for him to conquer?

Now hear William Tell among his native hills: "Ye crags, and peaks, I'm with you once again! I hold to you the hands you first beheld, to show that they are free! Ye are the things that tower and shine, whose smile makes glad, whose frown is terrible, whose forms do all the impress wear of awe divine! I rush to you as though I could embrace you!"

But who is that sporting with the nations, — playing with crowns as with the merest toys, and dashing them at will, upturning thrones as you would throw aside the couch on which you lay? Who but Napoleon Bonaparte! But not a wreck of his is left behind. He's gone, glimmering through the dream of things that were, — a school-boy's tale, the wonder of an hour. He leaves a nephew, who is but the merest shadow of his shade, — wearing but the mantle of his meanness!

How unlike the illustrious Lafayette, fighting for freedom by the side of Washington, and so closing his political life, that he had but to

"Wrap the drapery of his couch around him,
And lay him down to pleasant dreams!"

Now I hear the burning, cutting words of Burke, dealt in thunder tones to a profligate parliament: "Since I have the honor, — I should say, the dishonor, — of sitting

in this house, I have been witness to many infamous transactions ; I will speak daggers to your souls ; I will follow you with whips and stings, through every maze of your unexampled turpitude, and plant thorns under your heads ; while I have a tongue, or an arm, — they shall be free ! ”

Now the elder Pitt pleads the cause of freedom in these Colonies ! Now Milton leads us up to heaven’s gates on golden hinges turning, and down to the iron gates of hell, which grate harsh thunder ! Pope raises high the aspiration :

“ What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than heaven pursue.

Addison teaches immortality. He tells us that the soul shall live when stars shall fade away, — the sun himself grow dim with age, and nature sink in years :

“ But thou shalt flourish, in immortal youth,
Unhurt, amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds ! ”

Hear the great Cardinal Wolsey : “ Had I served my God with half the zeal I served my King, he would not, in my age, have left me naked to my enemies ! ”

But here comes Patrick Henry : “ Is life so dear,” he cries, “ or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery ? Forbid it, Almighty God ! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death ! ”

The elder, and the younger Adams, too, are here ! From the elder, with a face of fire, and an arm of steel.

we hear, "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I am for the declaration,"—while the younger rehearses, in alternate prose or verse, all changes that have been in politics on the world's wide face, since the day he was the boy ambassador to Russia.

But hark! What music is that we hear? 'Tis the silver notes of Clay, urging on a compromise for his country's good. He's no bronchitis now. "Sir, we are fighting a great moral battle for the benefit of all mankind."

Again, I hear another voice, that of the chief enchanter, mightier, statelier still, "I bring my Alma-Mater into these presence, that if she must die, she may die with dignity, and in her robes." It holds the bench of grave and gray-haired men spell-bound, — brings now, delight, and now, conviction; and anon, moves the deep fountains, and brings tears to eyes long since unused to weep. To him who holds such power, the fifty thousands of our country's lawyers look, and own him as their undisputed, legal head. Our country owns him as her greatest jurist, orator and statesman. The friends of liberty, throughout the world, feel his enchantment, and own him as their brightest star of hope; and tyrants tremble, and sit loosely on their thrones, while they hear him cry, "Liberty and Union, now and forever, — one and inseparable!"

Thanks be to God, he still lives, and will live, and be the central orb of freemen, till the purest justice, the highest patriotism, and the profoundest statesmanship, have passed from the memory of man! Yes, he will live till liberty itself shall die!

Whose firm, decided tread, is that amid the hosts? It tells at once of freedom and of rectitude. Just four words will give his history and epitaph: "I'll take the

responsibility !” None can mistake. It is Andrew Jackson !

But now I see a thing that makes me shudder. I see old Benton, with his bosom bared, crying, “Let the assassin shoot.” The crowd rush in before his pistol cocked, and-wrest it from him ! Who is that miscreant ? I blush ; I will not tell his name, but only, ’tis the lowest thing of man, on which he rightly treads. What means this fragrance, which so rich embalms the air ? ’Tis old Powhattan, smoking still the pipe of peace !

And now I seem to hear a shriek, a deadly groan ; and by the struggling, misty light, I see a recent gory corpse ! and now I see a curtain fall between ; I know I hear the lengthened cheer of myriads three times three — now all is hush ! The shout is louder, fiercer still ! *encore ! encore !! encore !!!* I need not tell whose corpse that is ; I need not sure disturb Macbeth ! or say that arching brow, that speaking eye, that tragic power, that magic wand, belong alone to Shakspeare.

But what two stately forms are those — what commanding voices they — now dispensing fine-spun metaphysics — now the broadest moral science, and now, with trumpet tongue, exclaiming, the one, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. The field is the world.” And the other, “Be ye lifted up, be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.” Who but Robert Hall and Francis Wayland ?

And now I hear a noble voice pleading the cause of oppressed humanity, everywhere, with a candor, a power, and a pathos, I have seldom heard before ; and who can fail, in these living thoughts, and burning words of the

dead, to recognize the frail form and mighty intellect of the celebrated Dr. Channing ?

But who is that watching so intently a falling apple, and thinking so abstractedly, as to be crowding down the burning tobacco in his pipe with the finger of his lady-love ? Who, that is now revealing to the astonished world the sublime laws of gravitation, which bind God's universe together ? Who, among the living or dead, can aspire to this honor, but the renowned Sir Isaac Newton ?

But, fellow-citizens, while we have great cause for festivity and rejoicing, on this occasion, I feel as though there was some cause of sorrow for myself. I have been looking long and carefully through this august assembly of the talented, the wise, and the good, from the four quarters of the world, and I can nowhere find Hypocrates or Galen, who were formerly, for the benefit they conferred on mankind, in the healing art, reckoned among the gods ; and yet, I am afraid they have not been invited here ; for such is the known generosity of the profession, that they never neglect a good, liberal invitation, to a feast.

On the other hand, I am again cheered by what I hear. I hear a multitude of the voices of celebrated women, from every quarter of the world, talking, all together, as is their wont, so that no two can possibly hear the same thing ; and yet, such is the charm of their varied discourse, as to fall with enchanting harmony on all but old bachelor's ears.

In the second place, fellow-citizens, we have reason to rejoice, because this august assembly have not only visited us, but they have determined to take up their abode, to settle among us, and to invite and urge every person of celebrity that may arise, throughout the world, annually

to do the same thing. Only think of this ! So renowned, so celebrated a colony of the living never came together on the earth ! And again, they come here to make us wiser, more enlightened, and better citizens. They will lead us patiently through all the labyrinths of the most complex sciences, even down to the minutest details of constructing a muck heap. They will lead us through all the mazes of architecture, from the erection of the most costly structures, — even the Crystal Palace, — down to the best construction of a hen-coop, or a mouse-trap. They will tell us how the planets, guided by an Almighty hand, roll on through infinite space, in glorious harmony, sending forth the ceaseless music of the spheres !

How the comets run their erratic course, with such exactness, as not to vary a second in a thousand years ! With all patience will they unravel to us the tangled skein of human governments, — obstruse mathematics, and obstruser metaphysics, — the common and the statute law, and laws of nations all unfold. They will teach a damsel how to entrap a husband, the suitor how to select, and woo, and win a wife, and both, in case of need, how to educate and train their children. They will impart to us all human science, and, so far as human, or an angel's ken can reach, unfold the secret purposes of God !

Tell us not, then, of the Rochester Knockings, or of spirits that are dumb. This, for mortals, is the true spirit-land, where souls embalmed, are endowed with trumpet tongue, which laughs at time and space.

One by one they will go with us to our homes, and amuse, refine, exalt, and teach us there, and thus convert the solitary chamber into the most delightful society. They will be with us when we lie down, and when we

rise up, attend us when we go out, and when we come in, be always, and everywhere, our guardian angel, our teacher, and our friend. Their instructions, treasured up, and heeded, will compensate the loss of every earthly good. The knowledge they impart gives pleasure both in the acquisition and the possession — and without this knowledge, what is the man of wealth? He is but the fabled monkey, in golden breeches dressed! — the ass in lion's skin; and if vice, detraction, and meanness hold a place, he is a loathsome thing — the very spawn of Christendom. Ten thousand times, ten thousand souls, like these, at once could dance a polka, on the finest needle's point, and room to spare.

Strive, then, for knowledge. It is power, and wealth, and happiness. It makes a man, a MAN. Study hard, and long, and well. Waste not these long and blessed winter evenings. Take home a choice spirit, from the spirit-land below, and ply him close with questions. Catechise him, scrutinize him, exhaust him, and you will find yourself a closer thinker, a stronger-minded man. Do this weekly for the Winter, and when the balmy rays of Spring appear, the long, coarse hairs of your ignorance will drop off, one by one, and leave a fairer, sleeker surface underneath. Do this faithfully awhile, and soon you will love to read, and love to think, and then you will never want for company. You can choose it at will, from the wide world, and from all time. This is a thing demanding great gratitude. Do we realize how fortunate we have been in this thing? Every citizen of the town has received a donation, as valuable to himself, as though he had been presented with a thousand dollars' worth of well-selected books, for his own private use; and if this

is not a cause, and an occasion for thankfulness, it is because there is no gratitude in man's degenerate heart.

Thanks be to God, and to our benefactor, for these books. In them, great men talk to us, and pour their spirits into ours. They are the voices of the distant and the dead. They give us the society, the spiritual presence of the best and the greatest of our race. No matter how poor we are, they will take up their abode with us, and give us ecstatic enjoyment. With us they will scale the mountain, look into the volcano, dive into ocean's depths, explore the heights, and depths, of sea and land, and sky. They will teach us to examine the minute, to comprehend the great, and scan the highest heavens.

But there is work in all this. Mind grows and expands by its own action, by its own exertions. These are but tools for our use. They are our intellectual food. But if we eat it not — if we consume and digest it not, we may still starve, and famish, and die, with intellectual hunger.

But we hope better things. Indolence here would be ingratitude, and ingratitude a triple crime, a sin against ourselves, our benefactor, and our God! — a sin against the priesthood, and our common country — against the clearest light of revelation, and the purest love of divine favor.

If parents neglect these things, if they still lie supinely on their backs, and hug the delusive phantom, ignorance, till the whole family is bound, hand and foot, with vicious habits, and degrading appetites, they sin against their own children; they crush every bud of hope in their own offspring; put out the kindling fires of genius; efface from their souls the stamp of divinity, and destroy the very image of God!

If children neglect them, and grow up in ignorance, they are sure to grow up in vice, shunned and avoided by all the intelligent and refined. They sin against their own parents, and are sure to bring their grey hairs in sorrow to the grave! If they neglect and despise these things, one evil habit, and vicious propensity after another, will enfold them in its coils, and consign them to a miserable mediocrity, or a damning infamy!

Let scientific subjects be the theme of discussion in the public assembly, the private party, the family circle, and it will give a death-blow to the follies of gossip, the meanness of detraction, the wickedness of slander, and the ungodly bitterness of scandal! There will then be no time to feast on murdered reputation, or fatten on human blood! But as the great whale, monarch of the deep, is obliged at intervals to come up from the chambers of the sea, and breathe the vital air, so this whole community would then feel compelled, at oft and repeated intervals, to come up from the sea of their varied duties, and breathe the pure, ethereal atmosphere of science! The fairer, the gentler, and the better sex, have a peculiar interest in these things. I know of no terrestrial paradise so nearly resembling my conception of those joys which are eternal, as is to be found in an assemblage of chaste, modest, refined, sparkling, intelligent, and intellectual females! And I know of no deeper earthly hell — a depth below the lowest deep profound, than a like assemblage of vile, ignorant, lewd, abandoned, and squalid women!

But the crowning glory of this gratuity is its perfect republicanism, its pure democracy, its perfect adaptation to the wants, and its angelic ministry to the poor as well

as the rich. Like air and water, it knows no distinction of age, or sex, or time, or space, or condition. It forces the whole literary world, from its creation, to bow at our feet, and pay perpetual tribute.

Milton will sing of Paradise as sweetly in a hovel, as beside a throne. Shakspeare will be as tragic there; Franklin just as wise. All philosophers will talk just as profoundly before an assembly of beggars, as one of princes. Thanks be to God for the art of printing! Thanks be to God for this more than princely gratuity! Thanks be to God for the liberality of good old Southboro'! Thanks be to God for the wise, assiduous, and disinterested labors of our literary priesthood! May they live forever! — their priesthood be perpetual, and God add his blessing!

But, Sir, this evening's occasion is not mine. You stand before us in the proud and enviable position of our benefactor. This assembly is waiting in patience for words of wisdom ready to flow from your lips. You have planned and executed a project of great usefulness to us, and everlasting honor to yourself. You have embalmed yourself in our memories, and in our affections, and by our gratitude we hope to make you realize, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

And now it only remains for me to express to you the sincere, the heartfelt gratitude of each and every citizen of Southboro', for your liberal bequest, so useful to us, and so honorable to yourself. Therefore, in the name of weary and withered age — in the name of tender infancy and robust manhood — in the name of Science — in the name of Patriotism — in the name of Humanity — in the name of Religion — and in the name of God, I thank you!

SUBSTANCE OF THE REMARKS

MADE BY

FRANCIS B. FAY.

On the occasion of the opening of the Fay Library, at Southboro', Feb. 1852.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, —

I need not attempt to describe to you my feelings, or to portray the conflicting emotions which oppress me, at this moment, and which have nearly deprived me of the power of utterance.

You may well imagine, that the kind and flattering terms, in which the Orator, who has just taken his seat, has alluded to the part I have taken in establishing this institution, that the “plasters” of praise, and “doses” of flattery, which your modern Hypocrates has administered to me with such a liberal hand, have so prostrated my physical energies, that I trust you will excuse me if I exhibit the weakness of a child.

The bountiful hand with which the gentleman dealt out his prescriptions, almost convinced me that we had before us Esculapius himself, the God of Medicine. I was aware that the gentleman was a disciple of the Allopathic School, but if I am to understand that this is a specimen of his practice, I am inclined to think I shall hereafter prefer to put myself under Homœopathic treatment.

I apprehend you will agree with me, in attributing the flattering terms in which the gentleman has indulged, to a habit necessarily connected with his profession, rather than to any merit of mine.

The gentleman's professional duties call him daily to sick rooms, and to administer to distressed and desponding patients. Being a philosopher, and understanding

the workings of the human mind, none know better than he, that "fancy kills, and fancy cures," and to raise the drooping spirit is the first step towards recovery. If, therefore, he would imitate the good Samaritan, if he would hope for success in the practice of the healing art, he must daily flatter and encourage his patients and their friends. Thus this daily habit has so far become second nature, that it is not easy for him, at all times, to resist its influence even where it is not merited. If, in the present instance, the gentleman has done me more than justice, if he has ascribed to me a merit to which I lay no claim, or which belongs elsewhere, it was because he was not in possession of all the circumstances connected with my early history. I trust you will permit me to set him right upon this point. If I know myself, I have no desire to convert to my own use unmerited praise, or to pluck a twig or flower from the wreath of honors, which should adorn the brow of another. I propose, therefore, to attempt to show, and I hope to convince you, that most of the merit which the gentleman has claimed for me in his address, justly belongs to you, or to those who were my friends and associates in my youth and early manhood. I see around me many of those friends and associates, and I am thankful that they are here to bear witness to the truth of the statement I am about to make, and to the justice of the position I assume. To make this subject clear, it will be necessary to take a brief view of my past history :

I was born upon your soil, and reared in your midst. I was "born with no golden fleece," — I had no Book of Heraldry or Coat of Arms to teach me that my

"Ancient but ignoble blood
Had crept through scoundrels ever since the flood."

My parents were poor but honest. They bequeathed me no legacy but their industry and economy. Without an education, without capital or friends upon whom to rely, with nothing but a good constitution, strong resolutions, and ardent hopes, I started on the journey of life ; I entered the lists in the struggle for honor and competency.

Friends of my early days, present and absent, when almost discouraged by obstacles, I was cheered on by you. You gave me credit ; you patronized me, and gave me business ; you bestowed upon me numerous offices of honor, profit, and trust ; you endorsed my character ; you gave me letters of recommendation ; for when I left you, nearly twenty-one years ago, to seek my fortune elsewhere, I carried in my pocket the credentials that entitled me to appear, for the second time, as your Representative in the Legislature of the Commonwealth.

These encouragements, these recommendations gave me character and credit abroad, and enabled me to take a favorable position among my cotemporaries, in my efforts to provide for myself and family. If I have met with reasonable success, (which I will not deny) I contend that I am mainly indebted for it, to the favor of that Fountain, "whence all our blessings flow," and to *you*, who first gave me courage, by your confidence and support.

If, then, by this success, I have been enabled to aid in the establishment of this institution, for the benefit of you, and your children, did you not contribute to enable me to do this, and should you not share in the honor ?

There is one portion of it, however, which perhaps I may claim for myself, and that is, that I have not forgotten you ; that I am not ungrateful to you, who were my early friends, and to whom I am happy of this public

opportunity to acknowledge my obligations, and to second your efforts to furnish your children with the means for their intellectual and moral culture.

I desire now to say a few words to the younger portion of this assembly.

My young friends, the object of this meeting, and its attendant circumstances, is more particularly designed for your benefit. The Library which has been placed in the room below, and which is now about to be opened, is for your use. There is a banquet prepared for you, of which you can all partake, a fountain at which you can all drink, "without money, and without price." But you must remember, that the books are worthless to you, if they are suffered to lie upon those shelves unread and unstudied.

The tools of the farmer are of little value while unused. If the farm is to be cultivated, they must be employed. So with these books. If your minds are to be cultivated, if you would enlarge your intellect, increase your knowledge, and qualify yourselves to become intelligent men and women, it is necessary that these *intellectual* tools, also, should be used, that these books should be read and pondered.

I am aware that there are those who contend that theological works are the only proper study for man. I believe no educated man, or one who knows the value of science, will advance such an opinion. All important as is the study of theology, it is not all which man requires. If he would not be a bigot, he must know something of science. Theology gives us faith, — Science proves that our faith is founded on Truth. If one doubts the existence of a God, and that He controls the universe, let him "canvass the starry heavens, and trace, with minute

exactness, each revolving planet, and its satellites," Let him contemplate the movements of a single planet, which requires hundreds of years to pass around its orbit, and measure, if he can, the inconceivable space that it occupies. Let him inquire, "What other planets circle other suns, what varied beings people every star." Let him "open the dark profound, where nature works in secret, search the beds of mineral treasures, and trace the forms of atoms." Who, that shall contemplate the broad ocean on which nature sails, and look, as it were, "through Nature up to Nature's God," — where is the man whose bosom burns with a single spark of the love of nature and its hidden treasures, that can, for one moment, think of bartering the exquisite happiness of contemplating Nature's works, and Nature's God, "for idle toys or indolent inactivity."

Let me, then, my young friends, urge you to make this prize your own. Do not delay ; but in the language of the Poet,

"Be wise to-day ; 'tis madness to defer ;
 Next day the fatal precedent will plead ,
 Thus on, till wisdom is pushed out of life.
 * * * Of man's miraculous mistakes, this bears
 The palm, "that all men are about to live." * * *
 All pay themselves the compliment to think,
 They one day shall not drivel.
 * * * When young, indeed,
 In full content, we sometimes nobly rest,
 Unanxious for ourselves, and only wish,
 As dutious sons, our fathers were more wise.
 At thirty man suspects himself a fool ;
 Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan ;
 At fifty chides his infamous delay,
 Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve,
 In all the magnanimity of thought,
 Resolves and re-resolves, then dies the same."

I beseech you, let not this last apply to you ; but, without delay, secure the treasures which are within your reach, and thus gain a rich reward for yourselves, and gratify those who seek your welfare.